

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### RECOGNIZING THE GRAND OPENING OF THE CNY CHINESE CULTURE CENTER'S ROCK CENTER FACILITY

**HON. JOHN KATKO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 24, 2017*

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Central New York Chinese Culture Center's new Rock Center facility in Syracuse, New York.

The CNY Chinese Culture Center plans to reopen the former Rockefeller United Methodist Church building as the Rock Center on July 22, 2017. The building has undergone significant renovations, but the structure's architectural character and history have been preserved to help facilitate the cultural exchanges that will occur at the Rock Center. The CNY Chinese Culture Center's hope for the Rock Center is to continue serving the Syracuse University and DeWitt communities with a wide array of programs, classes, and clubs.

Over the years, the CNY Chinese Culture Center has become a driving force in the Syracuse community, utilizing grassroots efforts to introduce Chinese heritage and culture to our community and foster cultural exchange. I am proud to recognize the grand opening of the CNY Chinese Center's Rock Center and I wish this outstanding organization continued success in the years to come.

### CLEVELAND METROPARKS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. MARCY KAPTUR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 24, 2017*

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the oldest park district in Ohio, Cleveland Metroparks, on celebrating their 100th Anniversary, marking a century's worth of service to our region.

In 1917, following the Ohio General Assembly's passage of landmark legislation allowing for the creation and development of park districts, Cuyahoga County probate judge Alexander Hadden appointed the first board of the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District. In an effort to support resource conservation and through the vision and leadership of their first director, William Stinchcomb—a self-taught engineer who first conceptualized the idea of a chain of parks connecting our communities—the Emerald Necklace was born.

From modest beginnings, Cleveland Metroparks held and preserved just 109 acres of land in Cuyahoga County's western and southernmost suburbs. Yet, within their first decade, what started with just one hundred acres of donated land would soon grow to encompass 9,000 acres throughout more than a dozen communities.

As a national leader in sustainability, Cleveland Metroparks' successes in natural resource conservation, as well as innovation in green infrastructure, provide essential environmental, health and economic benefits for all people. In fact, last year, Cleveland Metroparks won the prestigious American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration's National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management—an award that Cleveland Metroparks has received 4 times since 1994.

Our park systems play a crucial role in environmental stewardship and community health, ensuring not only the preservation and prosperity of our flora and fauna—but improving public health and wellness by preventing health related problems ranging from asthma and obesity to diabetes and mental health.

The Cleveland Metroparks also has a tremendous impact on the regional economy. Tourism remains one of Ohio's largest and fastest growing industries, producing \$43 billion in sales annually. Of that, Cuyahoga County contributes nearly 20 percent, generating \$8.1 billion for the economy in 2015. What's more, a recent study conducted by The Trust for Public Land found that Cleveland Metroparks alone generate nearly a billion dollars annually for the local economy.

Cleveland Metroparks has built an admirable legacy, from the Rocky River Reservation, the first land purchased by the park district, and its many trails weaving through the Valley's forests and wetlands, to the Centennial Trail improving access and re-connecting our region with Wendy Park, Edgewater Beach and Lake Erie's shore. The Metroparks have remained committed to the conservation of natural resources, the education of our community and the recreation opportunities for our friends and family.

Today, 100 years later and spanning 47 diverse communities, Cleveland Metroparks' more than 23,000 acres of preserved wetlands and forests, trails and paths, lakefront beaches, rivers and streams, golf courses and a nationally acclaimed zoo, have become a destination and gathering place for millions of runners, hikers, cyclists, boaters, kayakers, fishermen, birders, nature enthusiasts and families from all across the country.

In recognition of the 100th Anniversary of Cleveland Metroparks, please join me in thanking all those whose vision and leadership have shaped this vast network and helped create one of the most valuable and significant resources in Ohio.

### REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF JOSEPH GRANADOS ELIAS

**HON. J. LUIS CORREA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 24, 2017*

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of a special person that gave greatly

to our community, Joseph Granados Elias, who passed away July 6, 2017 at the age of 81. Mr. Granados Elias was a respected business owner, a loved community member, and a selfless husband and father.

Born in Corpus Christi, Texas, Mr. Granados Elias moved to California where he was the longtime owner of Fiesta Juice in downtown Santa Ana. A fierce advocate for Latino businesses, Mr. Granados Elias was known in our community as a fearless warrior and loving friend.

Mr. Granados Elias truly had a heart for others, and he spent his life serving those in greater need than him. One of the first Latino members of Kiwanis, Mr. Granados Elias was heavily involved with the organization, always thinking of how best to offer his time. When a community park needed more money to build a playground accessible for children with special needs, Mr. Granados Elias was instrumental in working with Kiwanis to raise sufficient funds.

This is just one example of how greatly Mr. Granados Elias cared for his community and how strong the relationships he built were. Mr. Granados Elias was known for his warmth, generosity, and incredible joy, which is reflected in the close relationships he shared with his family.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring and remembering Mr. Joseph Granados Elias, whose innovative entrepreneurship and loving spirit will live on in the hearts and lives of all those he knew and loved. He is an example to us all of what it means to be a public servant, and I extend my deepest condolences to his children, Suzanne, Sharon, Elizabeth, David, Paul and Albert; his ten grandchildren, and his seven great grandchildren. May God bless this family.

### RECOGNIZING LONGEST SERVING SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, VELMA LEE SEBRING, FOR OUTSTANDING MENTORSHIP

**HON. MO BROOKS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 24, 2017*

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Velma Lee Sebring for her service over the last 74 years as a Sunday school teacher at Centerpoint Baptist Church in Scottsboro, Alabama.

Mrs. Sebring began teaching Sunday school at Centerpoint Baptist Church in 1942. Having taught at the same location for approximately 74 years, she has surpassed the known Guinness World Record for the longest serving Sunday school teacher at one church. Mrs. Sebring began teaching Sunday school at Randall's Chapel United Methodist Church in 1938, meaning she has taught for a combined 78 years.

I believe the education of our young people is of the utmost importance. As a son, husband, and father of educators, I have seen

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